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ON PAGE 3

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# Tightening the reins on high-tech transfers to USSR

## Senate panel lists ways to halt leaks sapping West's technology edge

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### Washington

A Polish spy became the tennis partner and best friend of an American defense industry engineer, helped him with his financial problems, and walked off with information estimated by the US Central Intelligence Agency to be worth hundreds of millions of dollars.

The well-publicized case of American radar engineer William H. Bell is one of a number cited in a new Senate subcommittee report on the transfer, both legal and illegal, of US high technology to the Soviet Union and Soviet bloc nations.

The Bell case was an example of traditional espionage, which is hard to guard against. But the report of the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations indicates that it might never have happened had the Federal Bureau of Investigation been more alert and had the security system at the Hughes Aircraft Corporation been tighter.

The subcommittee report shows that in addition to such a classic case, where a foreign spy exploits the weaknesses of a source of intelligence, the Soviets and their allies have developed a highly sophisticated system of collecting publicly available defense information: spying through scientific exchange programs and establishing marketing and manufacturing companies in the US that buy high technology and munitions for illicit export to the Soviet Union.

A CIA report on Soviet acquisitions of Western technology said that William H. Bell over a three-year period, from 1977 to 1980, gave Polish agents more than 20 highly classified reports on advanced US weapons systems, including the F-15 fighter plane's "look-down/shoot-down" radar system. According to the CIA, the information given the Poles would permit the Soviet Union, first, to field much more rapidly its own comparable weapons systems and, second, to develop measures to counter the American systems.

In testimony before the Senate subcommittee, Mr. Bell said that a more effective internal security system at Hughes Aircraft might have pinpointed him as a security risk. He said it was well known that his fi-

nances were in disarray and that Polish spy Marian Zacharski was known to the FBI as a highly trained intelligence officer. Bell said that his security clearance had not been reviewed in 28 years. Bell is now serving an eight-year prison sentence. Zacharski was given a life sentence.

The unclassified CIA report on the Soviet acquisition of Western technology, prepared in response to the Senate subcommittee's investigation, notes that the US and its NATO allies have traditionally relied on technologically superior weapons to offset the Warsaw Pact's superiority in numbers of weapons. But the report argues that this technical superiority is "eroding" as the Soviets and their allies introduce more and more sophisticated weapons.

The Soviets, the report says, have obtained "vast amounts" of technology and equipment through both legal and illegal means, and it concludes that this is "one of the most complex and urgent issues facing the free world today." In certain areas, and most notably in the development of microelectronics, the CIA report continues, the Soviets would have been incapable of achieving their present technical level without Western technology.

The CIA predicts the Soviets will make new attempts through the 1980s to acquire such US technology as missile guidance systems, computer-aided aircraft designs, and submarine and airborne navigation systems — all areas of Western superiority.

To counter this, the Senate subcommittee recommends improved American intelligence on Soviet aims, a possible center for research into the subject, closer cooperation between the US Commerce and Defense Departments, a reassessment of the Commerce Department's ability to enforce the laws, harsher penalties for the possession of restricted goods and export of arms technology, closer coordination among allied nations, and increased security precautions by private industry.

The subcommittee also proposes amending the Freedom of Information Act to exclude requests made by foreign nationals. It says that court-authorized FBI surveillance should be permitted where there is "probable cause" to believe that export controls are being violated. Finally, it calls on the Defense Department to formulate a comprehensive policy.